



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT DEPARTMENT
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PRESS RELEASE

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**PROBATE AND FAMILY COURT ANNOUNCES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
NEW STANDARDS FOR CATEGORY E GUARDIANS AD LITEM/EVALUATORS AND
STANDING ORDER 1-08**

The Probate and Family Court Administrative Office has announced that **the new standards for Category E, Guardians ad Litem/Evaluators will be effective on January 14, 2008**. These standards will be applicable to all cases in which a guardian ad litem/evaluator is appointed by a judge of the Probate and Family Court. The Standards become effective with the implementation of Standing Order 1-08, Standards for Guardians ad Litem/Evaluators. The Standards can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/courts/courtsandjudges/courts/probateandfamilycourt/index.html>

The Probate and Family Court Administrative Office will be holding mandatory trainings for all guardians ad litem certified under **Category E**, pursuant to Supreme Judicial Court Rule 1:07. All guardians ad litem certified under **Category E** are required to attend one of the training sessions in order to receive further appointments under **Category E**. All guardians ad litem certified under **Category E** will be notified by the Probate and Family Court Administrative Office as to the dates and locations of these trainings.

Some of the topics that will be covered at the trainings include the importance of defining the roles of **Category E** guardians ad litem/evaluators, the essential elements of the evaluation including who to interview, what information should be included in the report, the importance of balancing children's rights to confidentiality vs. requesting waiver of the psychotherapy privilege and what to do when issues of mental illness, substance abuse, sexual abuse and domestic violence arise during the course of the evaluation.